



# COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

900 EAST MAIN STREET  
RICHMOND, VA 23219

*Air Force Association  
American Ex-Prisoners  
of War  
American Legion  
AMVETS  
Association of the United  
States Army  
Disabled American  
Veterans  
Fleet Reserve Association  
Korean War Veterans  
Association  
Legion of Valor of the  
U.S., Inc.  
Marine Corps League  
Military Order of the  
Purple Heart  
Military Officers Association  
of America  
Military Order of the  
World Wars  
National Association for  
Uniformed Services  
Navy Seabee Veterans of  
America  
Non-Commissioned  
Officers Association  
Paralyzed Veterans of  
America  
Reserve Officers Association  
Roanoke Valley Veterans  
Council  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
Vietnam Veterans of America  
Virginia Army/Air National  
Guard Enlisted  
Association  
Virginia National Guard  
Association  
Women Marines Association*

Adopted  
July 17, 2013

Updated  
January 5, 2014

## Position Paper 2014-04

### Electronic Return of Absentee Ballots by Overseas Uniformed Military Voters

1. **Objective:** To allow for the electronic return of absentee ballots by overseas uniformed military voters.
2. **Background:**
  - a. Overseas uniformed service personnel and their dependents often experience difficulties in casting absentee ballots due to a number of factors, including the timely return of a voted ballot.
  - b. Currently an overseas voter can electronically register and receive an absentee ballot per the Uniformed & Overseas Absentee Voter Act (UOCAVA). By Virginia Code the ballot must be returned via "snail" mail.

Election	Total Votes*	Total Absentee*	UOCAVA**
2008 – Nov. Gen.	3,752,858	506,672	14,107 (0.4% of Total Vote)
2010 – Nov. Gen.	2,214,503	106,888	1,785 (0.08% of Total Vote)
2012 – Nov. Gen.	3,896,846	447,907	Not yet available

\* Per Virginia State Board of Elections – Election Results  
\*\* Ballots Submitted by Domestic & Overseas Uniformed Military (Election Assistance Commission report)
  - c. SB830 as passed by the Senate in the 2013 General Assembly would allow the State Board of Elections (SBE) to provide instructions and procedures to enable uniformed-service voters outside the United States to return voted military overseas ballots securely by electronic format. As defined in subsections 9 and 10 of §24.2-452a "Uniformed-service voter" means an individual who is qualified to vote and is:
    - A member of the active or reserve components of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard of the United States who is on active duty;
    - A member of the Merchant Marine, the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service, or the commissioned corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the United States;
    - A member on activated status of the National Guard; or
    - A spouse or dependent of a member referred to in this definition.
  - d. "United States," used in the territorial sense, means the several states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, and any territory or insular possession subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.
  - e. The Impact Statement for SB830 states that there is no material fiscal impact on SBE. However, localities may experience increased costs
3. **Discussion:**
  - a. SBE has expressed confidence in developing procedures that address privacy and security concerns related to the electronic transmission, management, and counting absentee ballots from uniformed military personnel serving overseas.
  - b. Legislation is required to permit electronic return of the voted ballot from uniformed military personnel serving overseas.
4. **Recommendation:** That the Governor and General Assembly increase opportunities for overseas uniformed military voters to participate in elections by enacting legislation to permit the electronic return of absentee ballots.